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APR 27 1953
767 00/4-2153
XR 667.68 APR 27 1953
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SUBJECT: MARSHAL TITO'S VIEWS ON ALBANIA

Mr. Hamilton Fish ARMSTRONG tells us that Marshal TITO during their conversation on April 18 gave every evidence of being confident that Yugoslavia could take care of the Albanian situation. Tito pointed out that there were in Yugoslavia two-thirds as many persons of Albanian nationality as the total population of Albania. Tito apparently left no doubt in Armstrong's mind that the Yugoslavs considered that they were more accurately informed about Albanian conditions and understood the Albanian situation better than other countries.

Commenting that there might very well turn out to be a difference of opinion between the American Government and the Yugoslav Government on the future of Albania, Mr. Armstrong pointed out that, if this was the case, both governments should recognize that fact. Mr. Armstrong stated that he would consider it progress if the present Albanian Government was replaced by a national Albanian communist government and asked Tito if he would consider it progress if the present Albanian Government was replaced by a democratic government in the western sense of the term. Marshal Tito agreed that he would consider either of these hypothetical changes as an improvement over the present Albanian regime. However, the Marshal emphasized that the main thing was for Albania to have a government which the Albanian people had freely chosen. The Marshal repeated this theme when Armstrong suggested eventual establishment of an Albanian Government under some sort of international supervision so that the Albanian people's choice would be a real one.

Under existing circumstances, Tito, however, remarked that the establishment of a new Albanian Government

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Government was not an immediate question since the present regime was strong enough to resist any attempts to overthrow it from within. Tito specifically cautioned against employing measures from abroad to accomplish this end since the use of these could be designated as "imperialistic, colonialistic maneuvers". In this connection, Tito asked why the American Government gave the appearance of supporting former King ZOG, a reactionary who had no support in Albania. Tito said this caused people to suspect American motives. Mr. Armstrong replied that a similar reaction was caused by Yugoslavia's support of the Prizren Committee (League of Albanian Political Refugees). Tito was amused by this counter, but stated with apparent sincerity that too much importance was being attached to the Prizren Committee. He told Armstrong that he doubted seriously if he would return unharmed from a visit among the Albanian refugees. Armstrong interpreted this remark as an attempt on the part of the Marshal to show that the Albanian refugees themselves were not satisfied with the degree of support they were receiving from the Yugoslav Government.

Armstrong then asked whether the Marshal thought the United States was supporting Italian interests in Albania. Tito shook his head in the negative.

According to Armstrong, Tito showed more interest and animation in discussing the Albanian question than in talking about the other subjects which came up during the course of the hour and a quarter conversation.

For the Charge d'Affaires, a.i.:

Turner C. Cameron, Jr.
Turner C. Cameron, Jr.
First Secretary of Embassy

N.B.: The Department is requested to send processed copies of this despatch to American Embassy Rome, Athens, Paris, London and Moscow.

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